कृषि मंत्री, खाद्य मंत्री तथा नागरिक अपूर्ति, उपभोक्ता मामले और सार्वजनिक वितरण मंत्री (श्री चतुरानन मिश्र): (क) और (ख) जी नहीं। वर्तमान में राष्ट्रीय या राज्य स्तर पर किसी प्रकार की कोई गन्ना नीति नहीं है।

(ग) केन्द्र एवं राज्य सरकारों द्वारा किए जा रहे विभिन्न उपायों का उद्देश्य गन्ना उत्पादकों के हितों की सुरक्षा करना है। गन्ना के सांविधिक न्यूनतम मूल्य/राज्य द्वारा अनुशंसित मूल्य, जो चीनी मिलों द्वारा भुगतान योग्य होते है, का उद्देश्य गन्ना उत्पादकों को लाभकारी मूल्य दिलाना है। गन्ना आधारित फसल प्रणाली के दीर्घकालीन विकास की केन्द्रीय प्रायोजित योजना के अंतर्गत किसानों को फील्ड प्रदर्शनों एवं कृषक प्रशिक्षणों, उन्नत उपकरणों की आपूर्ति, ड्रिप सिंचाई इकाईयों आदि के माध्यम से, उत्पादन प्रौद्योगिकी के हस्तांतरण में सहायता दी जाती है। विभिन्न राज्य एवं चीनी मिल भी विभिन्न उपायों के माध्यम से किसानों की सहायता कर रहे है।

(घ) यद्यपि गन्ने पर कोई राष्ट्रीय नीति नहीं है, लेकिन इसके प्रतिपादन में किसी बाधा का प्रश्न ही नहीं उठता। वस्तुतः खाद्य मंत्रालय में कृषि क्षेत्र सहित चीनी उद्योग के अध्ययन के लिए एक अन्तर्विभागीय उच्च शक्ति प्राप्त समिति का गठन किया गया है। इसके संदर्भ शर्तों में शामिल है—चीनी उद्योग में वृद्धि एवं विकास के अध्ययन के साथ-साथ चीनी, गन्ना एवं चीनी उद्योग से सम्बद्ध नियमों एवं कानूनों का भी अध्ययन करना एवं वर्तमान नियमों एवं नियंत्रणों में सुधार लाने अथवा उनको समाप्त करने के लिए सुझाव देना, गन्ने की उत्पादकता के साथ-साथ चीनी मिलों के आधुनिकीकरण के माध्यम से उनकी कार्यकुशलता को बढ़ाने के लिए उपायों के बारे में सुझाव देना एवं उत्पादकों को लाभकारी मूल्य दिलाने के संबंध में सुझाव देना।

Cotton Production in Gujarat

3653. SHRI ANANTRAY DEV SHANKER DAVE: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the production of cotton in Gujarat in the current year;

(b) whether there is any fall in the production, if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether it is a fact that there is an all-time record of high cotton prices in Gujarat this year;

(d) whether it is also a fact that the benefit of the high prices has not fully gone to farmers and instead gone to the middlemen and the mill owners; and

(e) if so, the steps Government are taking to protect the interest of farmers in this respect?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND MINISTER OF FOOD AND MINISTER OF CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI CHATURANAN MISHRA): (a) and (b) The production of cotton in Gujarat in the current year i.e. 1996-97 is expected to be about 28.23 lakh bales of 170 kgs. each which is higher than the production level of 22.01 lakhs bales during 1995-96.

(c) to (e) As a result of increased production/supply, the prices of cotton in Gujarat have declined in the current year as compared to last year but these are ruling well above the minimum support levels benefitting the farmers. Further, the Government has taken various steps to help cotton growers. These include:

(i) The minimum support prices (MSP) of various varieties of cotton were announced before the start of the season.

(ii) Export quota of 12.20 lakh bales of cotton has been released during the current year of which one lakh bales of cotton is allotted to GUJCOT. In addition spill-over quantity of 6.90 lakh bales (approx.) from the export quota of 1995-96 season has been permitted to be exported by 28.2.1997.

(iii) The Cotton Corporation of India (CCI) has been making aggressive purchases to give support to cotton growers. As on 27.3.1997 the CCI purchases in Gujarat during the current season have been 2.39 lakh bales as compared to 1.84 lakh bales as on the corresponding date in the previous year. The CCI and GUJCOT have expoerted 1.69 lakh bales of cotton from Gujarat during the current season. State Marketing Federation and NAFED have

also been given export quotas and have also been buying cotton.

(iv) The ceiling of export of cotton yarn of counts below 41s in 1996 was increased from 80 million kgs. to 110 million kgs. For the year 1997, the ceiling for export of cotton yarn below counts 41s has been further enhanced to 120 million kgs.

(v) Cotton has been removed from Selective Credit Control.

(vi) There are no on stock-limits for cotton.

(vii) In the Central Budget proposals for 1997-98, it has been proposed to repeal Ginning and Pressing Factories Act of 1925 and the Cotton Control Order of 1986 will be invoked only in well defined emergency situation. Domestic futures trading would be resumed in respect of ginned and baled cotton.

Production of Pulses

3654. SHRI AKHILESH DAS: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the target fixed for production of pulses for the current year;

(b) whether it is a fact that the production of pulses during the current year is expected to be lower and is not likely to achieve the target; and

(c) if so, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND MINISTER OF FOOD AND MINISTER OF CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI CHATURANAN MISHRA): (a) and (b) For 1996-97 the target for production of pulses was fixed at 15.00 million tonnes, against which a production of about 14.02 million tonnes is estimated. For the current year (1997-98) the Planning Commission has intimated a production target of 14.50 million tonnes.

(c) The reasons for the low production of pulses are that the pulses are generally grown under rainfed conditions in less productive marginal lands where the crop often suffers due to moisture stress conditions. Pulses are also more prone to damage by the insect-pests cultivated under low input use and poor management practices which affect the productivity. Besides, there is no major genetic break through in pulses.

Quantity of Seeds required for the North-East Region

3655. SHRI W. ANGOU SINGH: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the total quantity of breed seeds, foundation and certified seeds required for the North-East region, State-wise;

(b) the total quantity of different categories of seeds produced by the North-East region, State-wise; and

(c) the total quantity of different categories of seeds supplied by Government through the producers to the North-Eastern States, State-wise?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND MINISTER OF FOOD AND MINISTER OF CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI CHATURANAN MISHRA): (a) to (c) The information is being collected from the concerned States and will be laid down on the table of the House.

Starting of P. G. Classes in Central Agricultural University, Imphal

3656. SHRI W. ANGOU SINGH: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have any proposal for opening Post-graduate classes in Social Sciences, Entomology, Extension Education, Agricultural Economics, Animal Husbandry, Agricultural Engineering in the Central Agricultural University, Imphal;